

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Suspension)
)
of the Educator Certificate of)
)
Gwendolyn S. Lockett,)
)
Certificate 188637)

ORDER OF SUSPENSION

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on March 8, 2006. On September 21, 2005, the State Department of Education (Department) sent Gwendolyn S. Lockett a notice of her right to a hearing regarding the possible suspension of her South Carolina educator certificate. Ms. Lockett received the notice, as evidenced by the signed postal receipt. Ms. Lockett requested a hearing, but subsequently entered into a payment plan in lieu of a hearing. Thereafter, Ms. Lockett failed to comply with the terms of the agreement. After considering the information presented, the State Board voted to suspend Ms. Lockett's certificate until she repays the full amount owed on her outstanding loan with the State of South Carolina obtained through the Center for Teacher Education, Recruitment, Retention and Advancement (CERRA).

FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Lockett holds a valid certificate and has over nine years of teaching experience. On August 14, 2001, Ms. Lockett signed a promissory note with the State of South Carolina to obtain a loan of \$2300 to pay for the costs of applying for certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). One of the terms of that agreement was that Ms. Lockett agreed to repay the \$2300 if she did not properly withdraw from the NBPTS process, nor submit the required portfolio to NBPTS, within the specified time frames. Ms. Lockett did neither and has not repaid the \$2300. CERRA and the State Department of Education sent several letters to Ms. Lockett informing her that the \$2300 was now due and of the consequences for failing to repay

the amount due. After receiving notice of the possible suspension of her educator certificate, Ms. Lockett made a partial payment and entered into a monthly payment plan with the Department on October 21, 2005. Since that time, Ms. Lockett has made only one monthly payment, received on January 6, 2006, and has a remaining balance of \$1400.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The State Board may suspend the certificate of any person for unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. §§ 59-25-150 and 160 (2004). The State Board finds that there is sufficient evidence supporting its decision to suspend Ms. Lockett's certificate 188637 from the date of this Order until she has satisfied her remaining financial obligation to the State of South Carolina, as established in the loan agreement referenced above. Upon payment of the \$2,300.00, if Ms. Lockett wishes to have her certificate reinstated, she may make a written request for reinstatement to the Office of Educator Certification of the Department of Education.

South Carolina State Board of Education

By: /S/Joe Isaac

Joe Isaac, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina

March 8, 2006